

CHARACTERISTICS

695 There was a disputed boundary between the village of Kurmer in the Chhota Dongar Mar *pargana* and the adjacent Kutru Mar village of Jatalur; the Jata clan asserted possession over a strip of land belonging to the Parilo clan of Kurmer. I suggested, on the strength of a tale I had heard of former Chiefs' methods of justice, that the head of each village should come with a cock to the land, and that the land should go to the clan whose cock crowed first. This was hailed by both sides as a sound solution, and off we went to the land; but just before we reached it the Jata headman began to hang back, and finally backed out of the test; I awarded the land to the Parilo clan to the approval of men present from other clans, and on going over the land found that it contained a *pagh'ei* or alternative village site of the Parilo clan besides the cromlech left to mark the site of the Village Mother's 'temple', the *kasyap-gaita's* *udam-garia* or seat of honour, and the *kotokai* or line of menhirs erected in the name of the Parilo dead. Here the Jata clan finally abandoned their claim when challenged by the Parilo *kasyap-gaita* to eat earth from under the Village Mother's cromlech.

181 To be left to live the free life of the hills, untrammelled by restrictions on his user of forest, earth and water or his right to shift his village and his *penda* cultivation, is the unconscious ideal of the Hill Maria. If he is sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, he will beg to be hanged rather than be confined within walls; and few of them or of the wilder Bison-horn Marias survive long imprisonment.

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[22] The Hill Maria shows great artistry in his bead-work, and is never at fault in his discrimination between colours and shades, though he uses for all shades of green and blue the one word *kagavondla*. He has general terms also for red, white, black and yellow, but none for intermediate shades. In his houses he draws rude cup-marking patterns, *suestikas* and strange creatures in white earth on his mud plaster, or makes rough clay representations of women's breasts. His songs are low and rather melancholic in sound, the youths' voices verging on contralto; but they are far easier for an English ear to understand than Hindu music, and have often a haunting refrain. Both he and the Bison-horn Maria love to hear European records on a gramophone, especially a good soprano or contralto, sea shanties, and violins or trios and quartets playing light chamber music; but operatic fireworks merely provoke laughter, Chaliapin singing the 'Song of Prince Igor' making them ache with laughter, but being often encored. The Marias as a whole have no musical instruments except drums. Though the Bison-horn Maria does not show the Hill Maria's artistry and

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1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria



Uragatta post, near Chitrakot Falls

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Danyakal and urakal stones, Arampur

BISON-HORN MARIA MEMORIALS TO THE DEAD

[Facing p. 280]

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FUNERAL CEREMONIES

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[177]
554] themselves socially they not only cease to follow old Maria customs, but begin to resent being called Marias and to claim the designation of Muria. In some places, especially in villages where it is hard to find suitable menhir stones, they erect in their stead posts of *saja* wood, which they call *wasgatta*. The upper illustration on plate XXI shows a very elaborate *wasgatta* from a roadside village near the Chitrakot falls, on the northernmost fringe of the Bison-horn country. It is carved on each of its carefully squared sides with representations of hunting scenes, and the objects of the chase. Originally these were picked out in red and blue paint. Plate XXII shows part of a large row of *waschal* menhirs by the side of the road from Dantewara to Kameli, at the foot of the bridle-path ascending to the Bailadila guest-house; such enormous menhirs as those shown behind the women in this illustration are seldom set up in these days; the tallest shown was thirteen feet high, and the broadest over six feet wide at the base. The normal size of those nowadays erected is shown in the lower illustration on plate XXI; this portrays part of the *waschal* of Aranpur village, by the side of the forest road from Kuakonda to Dummagudem, and at the head of the Aranpur pass. In this photograph the interesting thing is the large flat stone resting on four boulders. This is known as a *danya-kal*, and was placed there as the memorial of Birya-Marvi Hurra Wadde, who in his life-time was *perma* and *bhum-gaita* of Aranpur, as well as a *wadde*. The Birya-Marvi and the Kuhrami clans are the only two which always make *danyakal* and never set up *waschal* stones; all the other clans, even in the Marvi and Kuhrami phratries, and including the small or Chudala Marvi clan, erect *waschal* stones. This Aranpur *waschal* was not restricted to the Birya-Marvi clan, although the village was founded by that clan; the *danyakal* stone on the right edge of the photograph was the last stone at the south end of the row; next to it on the north were fifteen *waschal* stones of the Kunjami clan, and after them three of the Chudala Marvi clan. The small stones at the foot of the menhirs are known as *hanal-hutul* or ghost stools, and serve the same function as the *hanal-garya* cromlechs of the Hill Marias. Any recently erected stone can usually be detected either by the presence of a cow's or pig's tail hung over its apex by a loop of cord, or by the dirty white stains of libations of *landa* poured over the stone when it was set up.

316 The stone is selected and carried from the quarry to the place where it is to be erected in much the same way as that already described for the Hill Marias. I use the word quarry advisedly, for these great slabs or pillars cannot be found as surface boulders. I have not seen the actual quarrying; but they understand how to

2 [See cat. 116, pp. 426-427. - *Asiatic*]

Bison Horn Maria

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These pillars are usually erected near a highway—not necessarily a motorable one. They are usually made of the wood of *terminalia tomentosa* or *shorea robusta* and are erected with ceremonies similar to those used for a menhir. 764 [824]

As far as I know, the pillars are always made by non-aboriginals, but since the Marias give their instructions to the carpenters about the patterns they want carved, they do thus throw some light on Maria psychology even if they do not illustrate their sense of art. For example, the pillar in memory of Kopa Dhurwa at Massenar was made by Bharto, an Oriya carpenter of Jagdalpur. The pillars for Barse Marka at Barrem and for Marvi Masa at Jabeli were both made by Anda Kalar of Potali. For Barse Marka's pillar his sister's son gave a bull calf worth twenty rupees, cloth worth five rupees, two rupees in cash and daily rations for the fifteen days while the carpenter was working. 764 532 [435]

There was a fine pillar to a wealthy Maria named Muchaki Hunga near Dilmilli on the main road from Jagdalpur to Dantewara. It is a fat, thick pillar, carefully squared, standing some fifteen feet high with elaborate carvings round the base and a decoration of crocodiles and pigeons at the top. The whole is surmounted by a trident, obviously suggested by the carpenter, and on this again is a small bird. On the west face of the pillar there are carvings of dancers wearing bison horns and six girls who are realistically portrayed with breasts and genitalia. Below them is a tiger, a crane and a peacock. On the south side is a picture of the dead man riding an elephant, an umbrella in his hand and bags of money at the saddle. Five women follow him with pots of rice-beer and spoons. Below them are rats. At the foot are men ploughing, deer and tigers. On the east side is a man riding a horse and fish, horses and a tortoise. To the north is a man and wife with their children, a gourd for taking beer from a pot and representations of snakes and birds. Below this are two pairs of dogs apparently copulating, and at the very bottom some men are carrying a pot of rice-beer.

Near the pillar is a grave built up in the modern Hinduized fashion and protected by a little shed. [177]

Near Massenar, at the end of a long row of *urashal* menhirs is the pillar in memory of the famous Kopa Dhurwa. This is much more slender than the one at Dilmilli and is not so well carved. But it has carvings of Kopa himself on his elephant with the inevitable umbrella, a gun and a tobacco pouch. On his chest is a small circle which I was told represented his Jubilee Medal. The pillar is further decorated with carvings of men dancing with the bison-horn head-dress, boys and girls dancing with a pot of rice-beer, a man trying to drag away a girl by the hand, crocodiles,

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

Bison Horn Maria

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532 porcupines, peacocks, fish and tigers. The carpenter had put in a representation of Hanuman, but the Marias, knowing little of him, supposed it was a policeman included to emphasize Kopa's dignity.

The pillar also has, or had, pigeons on the top and there was a trident, though the Marias were ignorant of its meaning. 'It is the pole's turban,' they said. 'It is made of iron to save us the trouble of renewing it.'

It is obviously impossible to describe all these pillars¹; in 1942 they were to be found near Chitrakot, near Killepal, at Lalaguda, near Sirisguda, at Taragaon, at Kumalnar and at Garda. I saw a very simple one at Chingner in honour of an important member of the Lekhami clan. It was standing out in the jungle by itself; there were three rows of lozenges cut in the wood near the top and a single carved pigeon above. It was still red with oil mixed with *geru*. At its foot was a flat stone supported on two others, the *hanal-garya*. From the top there hung a strip of cloth, possibly a bit of the dead man's dancing dress.

It is important to note that these pillars are closely associated with the megalithic culture of the Marias. Sometimes both a menhir and pillar are erected for the same man; sometimes the pillar stands at the end of a row of stone monuments. It is not, therefore, in any sense a substitute for the *waskal* but a supplement to it. I have noticed a similar combination of stone and wooden monuments among the Lanjhia Saoras who have come under Kond influence.

[171] It is tempting to suppose that the various animals and birds carved on the pillar have some totemic significance, but I doubt if this is so. In the first place, every pillar has a wide variety of animals portrayed upon it; in the second the people themselves say that these animals simply represent the ordinary objects of the chase and are carved to indicate some of the interests of the dead man. Each pillar in fact attempts to be a biography in wood of the deceased.

114 These notes are desultory enough, but they do at least give me an opportunity of paying some tribute to the man whose endless docility to facts has enabled him to make so striking a contribution to science and whose great-hearted affection for the aboriginals has led him to propose a policy and establish principles which, if adopted by the National Governments of the future, will preserve freedom and happiness in the hills and forests of India. There is much that is tedious in anthropology, much that hardly seems worth while,

¹ The pillar of Mervi Oyami Misa, the homicide, is described in detail in *Maria Murder and Suicide*, p. 201.

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he would repay with 50 per cent. interest.¹ Although it is clear that these Teli, Kalar and Telugu money-lenders do levy an exorbitant toll on the Maria villagers' produce, it is equally clear that they are fulfilling a necessary function, which has become the more necessary since the stopping of *podu* or *jalapod* cultivation below the hills has restricted the Marias in most villages to permanent rice cultivation on small acreages always dependent on seasonal rainfall evenly distributed in time. If such money-lenders are excluded, then they must be replaced by Government grain depots and village grain banks.

Of Maria funeral rites the *Gazetteer* observes that a stone or a carved post about five feet high is usually put up to mark the spot where a man's body has been cremated, and that 'sometimes one comes across a forest glade strewn with these memorials, the only sign of some deserted village, the very name of which has perished'.² Many rows of carved wooden posts may be seen between Bhamragarh and Lahiri, while at Lahiri itself I saw scores of such posts and of the small cromlechs (*hanal-garya* or 'thrones of the Departed') described on page 273, and mentioned in the *Gazetteer*³ as built on the spot where the body was burned. The top of one of these very substantial funerary posts, or *hanal-gutta*, photographed at Lahiri, is reproduced as one of the illustrations in this Supplement. Noticeable are the carved wooden horns, between which is a carved wooden bird, probably a hornbill. The wooden horns are common, and probably are a modern symbol of the cow formerly sacrificed at the erection of a menhir or wooden *hanal-gutta* by Hill Marias⁴ and Bison-horn Marias⁵ throughout Bastar: the funerary customs of the Chanda Marias seemed, however, to be Hill Maria in type, and this was confirmed by oral enquiries at Lahiri.

The addiction of the Bison-horn Marias and of the Kutru Hill Marias of Bastar to cock-fighting has been described on page 162. I particularly inquired if the weekly cock-fights at Oikal in Ahiri zamindari, there mentioned, and at Lahiri itself still went on. But all cock-fighting among Chanda Marias had for some years been stopped under orders from an inexperienced young European District Superintendent of Police on the theory that it contravened the Gambling Act. But the Marias maintained that, as in Bastar, so here, there had never been cash betting (as, indeed, one might expect in a region where all transactions are still so largely in kind), but the defeated bird had passed to the owner of the winning bird.

¹ For further details, see *The Aboriginal Problem*, pp. 183-4.

² *Chanda District Gazetteer* (Allahabad, 1909), p. 106.

³ *Ibidem*, loc. cit.

⁴ See pp. 278-9.

⁵ See p. 281.

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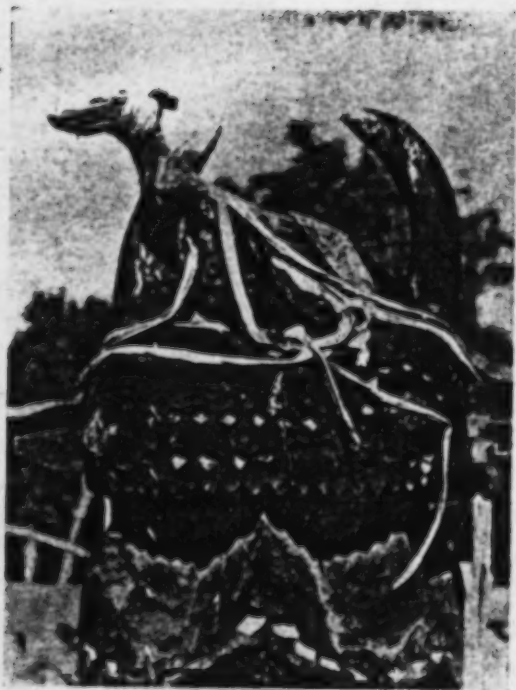
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1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

Bison Horn Maria



[W. V. Grigson]

The top of a Maria funerary post (*kanal-gutta*)
at Lahiri, Chanda district

[End Plate 4]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

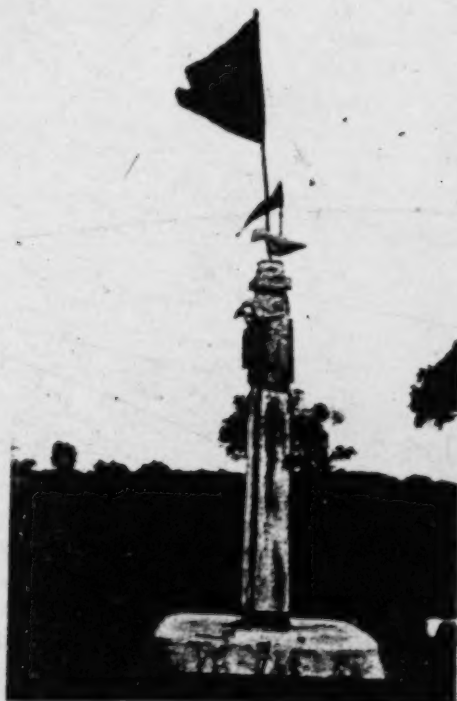
AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

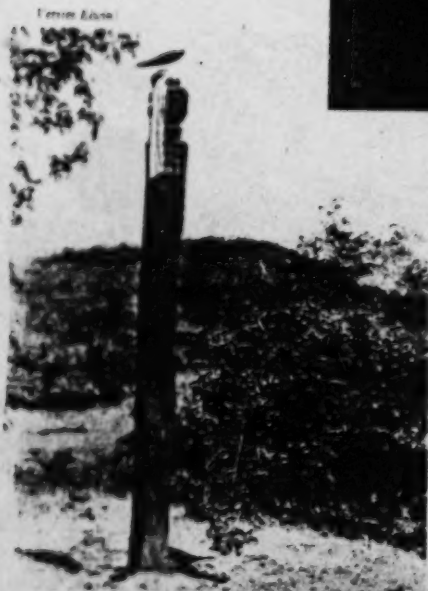
Bison Horn Maria

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Memorial pillar
at Bare Arapur



Vernon Elice



Memorial pillar (for members of
the Lekhami clan) near Chinger.
Note the cromlech at the base

[End Plate W]

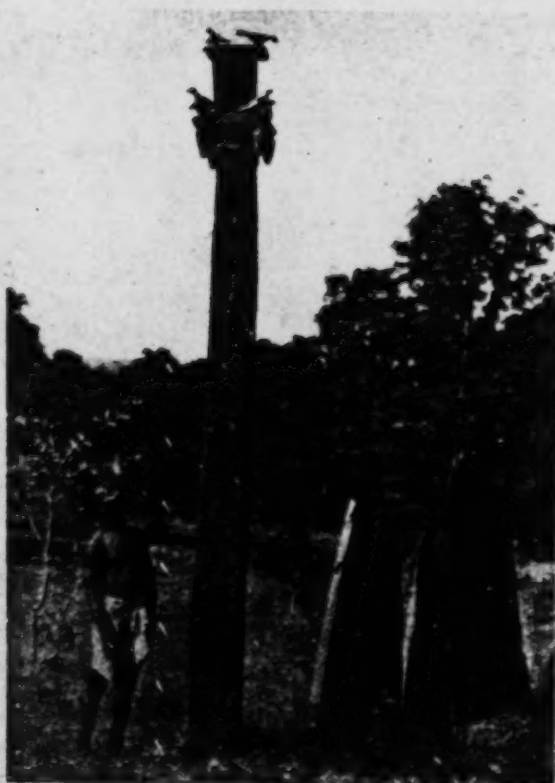
1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

Hill Maria

Bison Horn Maria

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Memorial pillar for Barne Maria at Barrem

[Faint text, possibly a signature or date]

[End Plate X]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949

AW32 Gond AW32

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Tati Mendra of Tikampal, with the 'wooden'
home or 'vehicle' of the Tati clan-god Hanga

(Vance Elton)

[End Plate z]

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

778 The buildings vary greatly. Some are solid mud houses with strong doors,
 346 others are open sheds, a few stand in substantial compounds of their own



FIG. 24. Bram horse, made by Ghasia, of
 a type often placed in Muria shrines
 Height 94"

with pillars and swings before the entrance. The furniture and symbols inside vary as greatly. In the solid buildings there is generally something that might be damaged by cattle or blown away in a storm—little brass images of horses, elephants and bulls, elaborate litters for Danteshwari, bunches of peacock feathers. Flags and very small images are wrapped up and put into an earthen pot hung from the roof. The long Gotal poles (with a big bunch of peacock feathers at the top) are slung from the roof, and the Anga Deo are hung on ropes from the roof or placed resting on bamboos. Other symbols of the gods are chains, spears, axes, digging tools, whips of cow-hair, shields.

In the more open sheds, the symbols of the gods have to be slung high up very near the roof. At the foot of the central pillar there is generally a flat stone which serves as the seat of the

god, and there are several big stones placed together to form a hearth for the cooking of the new grain and pulses or sacrificial animals. The gods are often taken out of their temples to be worshipped, at least on all major festivals, but the sacramental cooking is done inside. So you may often see big wooden spoons stuck in the roof. Outside the temple, there may be a swing with a spiked seat on which the mediums can prophesy; there is often a row of wooden pillars, each with a stone seat before it, to which certain visiting gods can be tied, and there may be a stone for special offerings to the dead.

On the wooden pillars, there are often phallic symbols. At Metawand I saw an elaborately carved vagina showing the clitoris and labia; there are similar carvings at Markabera and Bayanar.

I will describe one or two representative shrines, for this will give a better idea of them than any general account. At Markabera is the *pen-raser* of the Wadder clan, and near the temple is a row of menhirs erected for members of the clan who have died in the neighbourhood. But Markabera is not the original *pen-raser* of this clan. That is at Kakori, where the clan-god, the Anga Bope Harma, has his residence. Many years ago, Bope Harma had a son at Kakori who was named Bhuniriya; two brothers of the Wadder clan lived there as the Dhurwa Pujari. After a time Bope Harma ordered one of the Wadder brothers to go to Markabera and make a new *pen-raser* there with a temple to Bhuniriya.

The temple is built with nine wooden pillars, fixed in place by the clan-priest who put iron slag at the bottom of each hole. Bundles of grass called *gubbs* were prepared by a Karanga, a clan *akomana* to the Wadder clan; mahua flowers and water were offered them and they were tied to the top of the pillars before thatching. The roof was then thatched, but no walls were made. Every ten years, the *pen-raser* building is renewed.

MURIA RELIGION

346 Just inside the gate of the enclosure there is a line of pillars and four stone seats. These poles are for the convenience of such visiting deities as are



FIG. 25. Brass swing, made by Ghasia, of a type often placed in Muria shrines
Breadth 8 1/2"

[74] represented by poles or flags and can be tied to the pillars; the stones also are seats for those gods who have a traditional or family right to come to the temple. Such are Kustirmago Pen, a cousin of Bhumiriya, an Uika god from Kasabahi; Lath Kuar, Bhumiriya's son, a Wadder god from Tadopal; Inde Muitar, a Karanga god of Suhnar and Son Kuar, son of Kanda Dokara, a Maravi god from Garhbangal. Near the gate of the enclosure is another stone of sacrifice where black hens are offered to the dead. One of the pillars is used to tie the buffaloes and bulls which are to be sacrificed to Bhumiriya.

[831] Entering the temple, we find a clean open shed with broad wooden pillars on which are carved crude representations of the sun and the vagina. Here too are four stone seats. The chief is, of course, for the lord of the temple Bhumiriya himself. The second is for his father Bope Harma who is brought every ten years to sit with his son. The third is for Dhursai Kuar, a son of the Pat Deo in Jagdalpur, who comes at festivals from Timnar, and the fourth is for Lalsai Kuar of Metawand.

From the roof hangs an earthen pot containing little bells and a bundle of peacock feathers. Another pot has in it a piece of cloth used as a flag at festivals. In the roof are ten large wooden spoons, which are used for the

MURIA RELIGION

and in front of the shrine a pile of old clay elephants, bulls and horses. 346
And indeed I was told that the Anga used to live up on the hillside but was
offended by the rough Muria habits and moved down to the plain where he



FIG. 26. A typical carved wooden pigeon often found in Muria shrines
Length 9 1/2"

would not be offended by the sight of his worshippers eating beef. Here, in vivid symbol, was the god leading the hillmen down into the plains, from the open free hut to the enclosed house, to a reform of diet and a change of religious custom and the use of ephemeral images made by low-caste Hindu artisans.

There are two other small temples, both open sheds, to visit; both are for the Naitami clan. The first is for Paknabundin Matal, who is represented by a big stone, and the other for Tallur Muttai, the Village Mother, also represented by a stone. These four temples of the plain are not without their charm; set among great trees they look towards the grim rocks of the hills above them. But they have not the hard clear light and freedom of the shrines that brave the rocks and mountain.

VI. THE MURIA PRIESTHOOD

Who are the priests that officiate at these temples? In a sense every Muria is a priest; for the head of each family tends the dead of his house and can make offerings to his personal gods, but there are priestly families of greater or less influence which have performed the worship of the gods for generations. 793

Notable among these is the priest of the clan-god or Anga, often now called the Pen-Pujari or Pen-Gaita. In the Chota Dongar and Partabpur areas, he is called the Pen-Waddai. He is also known as the Dhurwa, which is the name of a tribe in the south of the State and possibly has associations with the Dhur Gond. This use of a tribal name as a priestly title is paralleled by the use of the word Baiga to denote a village-priest. It suggests that the Dhurwa tribe like the Baiga is regarded by the people as of great antiquity. [614]

Then there is the priest of the *Mam* or earth. The Kaser-Gaita (knife-priest), also known as the Bhum-Gaita or Mati-Gaita (earth-priest), has the duty of offering sacrifices to the earth and keeping the village free of disease. It is he who must go to the fields and clearings when they are prepared and must make offerings at sowing time and harvest.

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

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homeback; so do the Korku on their carved memorial tablets.¹ The Muria often offer horses of clay or brass (Fig. 24) at their shrines. Sir Lewis Fernald



After a photograph by G. F. Ramsden
FIG. 25. Gond shrine near Nagbir, Chanda District

discovered a remarkable iron horse among clay horses offered to a village god on the top of a hill of manganese-ore in the Chhindwara District, which he thought might be compared with the horse offered to the Southern Indian deity Iyenar.²

One of the oldest of Indian sacrifices is the *asvamedha*, or horse-sacrifice, which has been traced to Scythia. 'There has always', says Penzer, 'been a close connexion between horses and the sea-god, and also with the sun. The latter connexion is due not merely, I think, to the fact that the horse was the "vehicle"—of the sun-god, but because, through its swiftness, strength and activity, it was itself a symbol of the sun.' Penzer gives an account of the rite, which included the horse's consecration and its release for a year's wandering before the actual sacrifice. After its death, the queen lay with the animal so that its great powers of fertility might be transferred to her.³ Fraser describes rites for the horse among the Russians and Chinese.⁴ The Greeks sacrificed horses to the sea-god.

This association of the horse with magic, worship and sacrifice provides a background to its connexion with divination and ecstatic trance among the

¹ See W. Koppers, 'Monuments to the Dead of the Shills and Other Primitive Tribes in Central India', *Annali Lateranensi*, Vol. VI (1942), *passim*; D. H. Gordon, 'Korku Memorial Tablets', *Man*, 1936, Vol. XIX.

² L. Fernald, 'An Iron Horse from the Central Provinces', *JRASB*, Vol. II (1936), pp. 211-14.

³ *The Ocean of Story*, Vol. IV, pp. 14-16.

⁴ *Pausanias*, Vol. IV, pp. 197f.

MURIA RELIGION

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Garo at their great annual festival of the ingathering of the harvest called the *Wangala* or *Gorwala*. At the climax of the Gond-Pardhan ceremony of the Laru Kaj in Mandla the 'horses of the god' perform an ecstatic dance.¹

This custom of making horses to dance with may be compared to that of the Buryat shamans of Baikal (Siberia) who use horse-staves made of wood or iron, the upper part being bent with a horse-head carved on it, while the middle part of the stick forms the knee-joints of the horse, and the lower end is fashioned into a hoof. Bells are tied to the horse-staves and 'to make it look more realistic' miniature stirrups are added. They represent the horses on which the shaman rides to the Upper and Lower Worlds. In its power of inducing trance the horse-stave appears to be connected with the drum which is often covered with horse-hide.²

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I have noticed very similar customs among the Muria. Lingo Pen has two horses always kept in his shrine at Semurgaoon. These are decorated roots of trees which have been chosen because their shape resembles that of a horse's head. At the festivals of the god, these 'horses' are carried about by the mediums and are used both for divination and to stimulate trance. Decorated staves representing horses are carried by many of the chelik when they attend the clan festivals in the Abujhmar foot-hills. In one village, Kanher, members of the Gandu sept have a special relation with the wooden horse of Bara Pen. At Metawand I watched for several hours the antics of a medium who was carrying on his shoulders the wooden horse of his clan-god and at Bandopal a medium carrying an imaginary horse on his shoulder 'ambled, caracoled, pranced and plunged' for two miles before my slow-moving car as we made our way into the jungle for the Marka Pandum. 'The god rides upon him', they told me, 'and he cannot stop dancing for days at a time.' At a wedding in Malakot, I saw a medium riding on a characteristic hobby-horse; and again in the Dhurwa country to the south, I saw a man dancing astride a similar wooden hobby-horse. In both cases the rider would fall into trance if anything went wrong with the proceedings and would be able to diagnose the supernatural cause of the trouble.

This association of the horse with trance may be due to the dignity and beauty of the animal or to its swiftness, or possibly because it is regarded as a fertility offerings symbol.

'Three experiences', says Campbell, 'combine to make the horse a leading guard against the Evil Eye. To horse-owning peoples, his willing strength, intelligence, spirit and devotion make the horse the guardian of the higher or self-sacrificing type. Among tribes to whom the horse is strange, his size, power and fury make him a friend requiring and rewarding the process of squaring. To all who have dealings with the horse, his nervousness, his delicacy, his liability to strange sweatings and other sudden sicknesses shew that the horse is a favourite home for spirit-influence.'³

IX. THE CURE OF DISEASE

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Where the trouble is sickness, there seems to be what would be regarded elsewhere as a definite element of 'suggestion' in the Siraha's treatment. In December 1940, I was lying very ill in my camp at Metawand. The Pargana

¹ Cf. Shamsoo Hivale, 'The Laru Kaj', *Man in India*, Vol. XXIV (1944), p. 222.

² M. A. Caupléka, *Aboriginal Siberia* (Oxford, 1914), p. 224, quoting Agapitoff and Khamsloff.

³ J. M. Campbell, 'Notes on the Spirit Basis of Belief and Custom', *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XXX (1901), p. 100.

• 532



above: Uraon village elephant
of Saperom

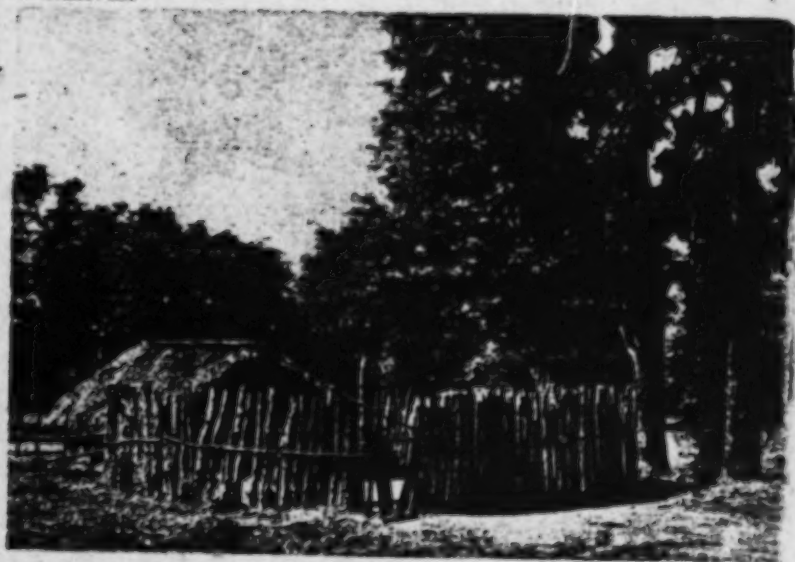
below: Uraon diumkuria
at Borbamby

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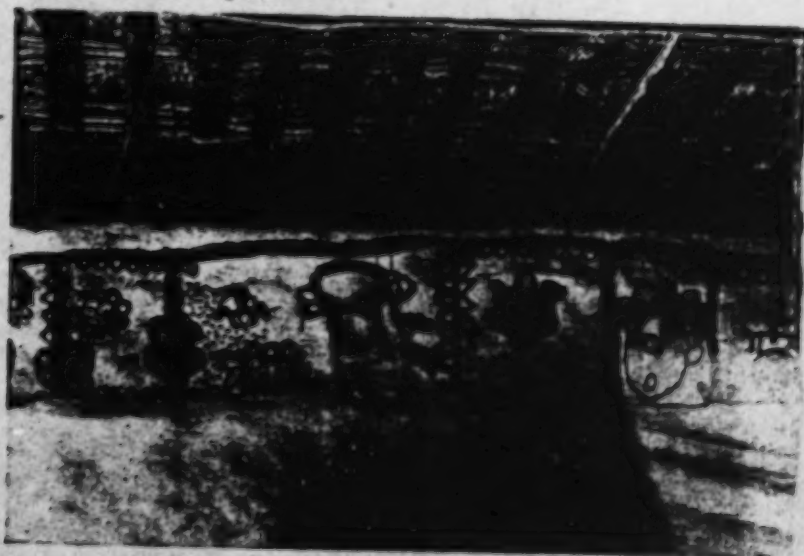
[p. 224 (A)]

Plate LXVIII



The ghotul at Maon

Black and red wall-paintings
in the More Herma ghotul



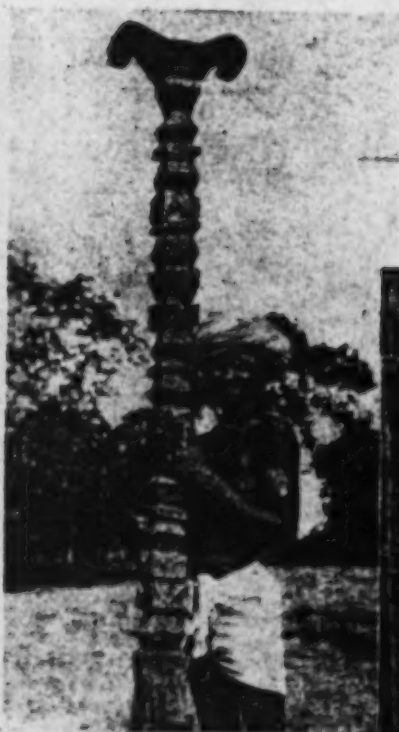
2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947

AW32 Gond AW32

Muria

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Pillar at Binjha
with the chisel
who carved it

Drawing of
old census
number-100



Plate LXXIV

[534]



Carved
a piece
drawn in
Dagupan

[p. 356(N)]

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415

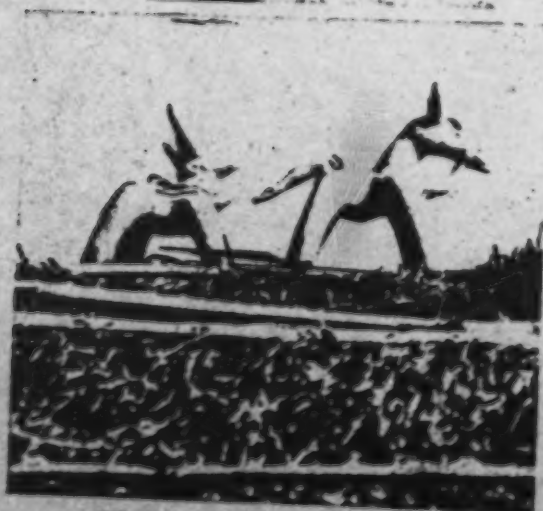
Motiari of Palli with
leaf-cup

Plate LXXXVII



• 532

Pala festival
earthen
locks put on
the road for
luck



[p. 428 (A)]

X883
X484
796
535
● 532



Plate XCVIII

Huli expedition mask
(From Sirpur)



Clay Dandur masks representing man and wife (From Kachera)

[p. 500(a)]

Plate XCIX



Mask used in Chherta dances (From Berma)

[p. 508 (A)]

Plate C

Earthen dolls
from Phanda



Malke and
Dulona with
earthen
dolls at
Chandabera



X 883
796
535
● 532

Nakta mask used
for Chharta dance



Photo C11

Masked chelik
representing a
frog or leopard,
at Phunder



[P. 512 (B)],

GHOTUL EXPEDITIONS

Here the chalik said that the animals represented were lizards and they were climbing the tree to catch a wood-pigeon (Fig. 124). At the top of each toy were cymbals that clanged whenever its strings were pulled.

883^x
484^x
796
535[5:4
532]

FIG. 125. Gong from Alor
Cf. Plate CV

Plate CIII



532
292
293

Pur Kolang mask

[p. 528 (W)]

● 532



Wooden dolls, representing a chalik and motiari, attached to gongs and carried over the shoulder on any festive occasion

Photograph by R. S. S.
Plate CV

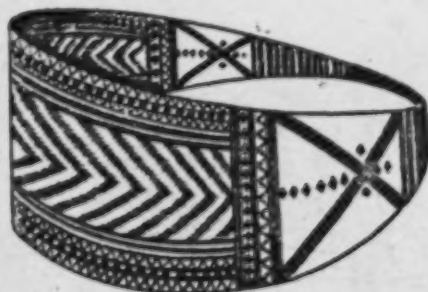
[p. 532 (A)]

164 State Medical Department has done much to check the spread of the disease. Malaria, as everywhere in the Indian forests, is endemic, but few suffer from enlarged spleen. Leprosy and the venereal diseases are very rare. Skin diseases are also much less common than among the more elaborately clothed and thus dirtier people of the north.

291 Men wear a small loin-cloth and sometimes a little turban. The women tie a sort of skirt, very short, round their waists :

it hangs down to the knees. The breasts are covered only with

• [532 ornaments; when
301] visiting a bazaar girls may tie a small piece of cloth round their shoulders. They often wear a thin brass fillet round the hair, and the older women use a large snood



Brass fillet worn by Maria women

which is most becoming. Round the neck are masses of bead-necklaces, and iron or brass torcs. The bright colours of the beads and the shining brass fillets against the rich brown skin make a sight of unforgettable beauty.

361 The Bison-horn Maria village is laid out on the same lines as the Gond village of the Central Provinces, unlike the communal settlements of the Hill Maria, Baiga or Juang. Each house stands in its own garden which is sometimes a substantial field, and a village may cover a very large area in consequence. Often a village is composed of anything from six to twelve small hamlets, each of which represents the grouping of a family round its patriarchal head. The little huts stand among woods, on rocky hill-sides, in the shade of spreading trees. Sometimes they appear almost submerged by waves of yellow sarson flowers or red jhira vegetable.

[485] 293 Each village has a substantial building for the accommodation of travellers and this is used by the unmarried boys as a dormitory. The unmarried girls also sleep together, some-

361

THE BISON-HORN MARIA

33

322 on the main road from Jagdalpur to Dantewara. Near
 766 Massenar at the end of a long line of menhirs is the pillar
 in memory of the famous Kopa Dhurwa, which has a carving
 of the old man wearing his jubilee medal. There are others
 at Chinger, on the way to Chitrakot and in a few other
 places.

322 Each pillar attempts to be a biography in wood of the
 766 deceased. We see him important carrying the symbols of
 532 wealth and power and riding on a horse or elephant; we
 see the dancers that delighted him and the landa pot which
 never failed to give him pleasure. We are shown the
 knives and axes that he used; the animals that he saw or
 hunted in the forest. The pillar for Oyami Masa, the
 homicide, had several carvings illustrating his work as a
 Siraha.

X

623 Every Maria village has a panel of secular and religious
 632 officials. There is the headman (often called the Peda), his
 assistant (the Kandki) and a Kotwar, who has the duty of
 reporting to the police all births and deaths within his
 jurisdiction. Each group of villages belongs to what is
 called a Pargana, a relic of the older administrative system
 of the State, and at the head of each Pargana there is a
 Pargana Manjhi. Each village has its panchayat presided
 over by the village headman, and each Pargana has a Pargana
 panchayat which is a Court of Appeal. In 1932, the village
 panchayats among all the aboriginals in Bastar were
 entrusted with a certain amount of criminal and civil work.
 The regular Courts were deprived of jurisdiction over the
 tribesmen for no fewer than seventeen Sections of the
 Indian Penal Code, including those dealing with simple hurt
 and assault, thefts of property up to five rupees, mischief,
 trespass and adultery. The panchayats were permitted to
 deal with claims for civil damages that might arise out of
 the criminal offences, and in other civil claims not exceeding
 twentyfive rupees. They were permitted to impose fines of
 not more than twentyfive, and in marriage cases to allow
 expenses up to fifty rupees. The Kotwar had the business
 of reporting panchayat decisions to the police. An appeal

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943

AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

221
532

*Detail of Muchaki
Hunga's pillar at
Dilmilli*



*Newly-erected pillar
near Chitrakot*

[Facing p. 81]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943

AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

273
415
417



221
532
273

*Apparatus for distilling
mabua spirit*



*Detail of memorial pillar of
Kopa Dharua at Massenar,
showing people serving rice-
beer*

273
285
415
417



Woman making rice-beer

[Facing p. 96]

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943

AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

221
532

*A murderer's memorial. Wooden
pillar in memory of Oyami Marvi
Masa at Jabeli*

*Detail of Marvi Masa's memorial
pillar, showing him as a Siraha
sitting on his swing*



[Facing p. 176]

764 he murdered. The stone next to his is for Marvi Buta who was also sentenced for this murder and also died in jail. But there was nothing at all in honour of the murdered man.

764 The erection of a carved memorial pillar is probably the
 532 greatest honour that the Maria can pay to the dead. It is the equivalent of being buried in Westminster Abbey. Masa's pillar is a very fine one. It shows him as a Siraha sitting on a swing: a streamer of untidy hair blows out from his head. Another carving shows him mounted on an elephant. Another portrays him riding on a horse attended by his wives. All round him are the symbols of his life; deer and tigers represent his love of the chase; axes, swords and knives symbolize his valour and enterprise; two men carry a pot of rice-beer in memory of his drinking prowess.

775 The business of keeping the ghost of the murderer or his
 789 victim quiet naturally greatly exercises the minds of the village medicine-men and priests. There is danger either that the ghost will cause trouble among the other ghosts of the family, and thus by annoying the ancestors may bring trouble upon the living: or it may inspire another member of the family also to commit a murder; or it may return and simply make itself troublesome. At Phulpar, after Pandu had been hanged and the usual ceremonies performed, the village priest sacrificed a hen near the pyre saying, 'Now we make your home here: live here with your ancestors peacefully'. If they fail to do this, they said, they think someone else in the house will also commit a murder. Then they erected a saja pole and after sacrificing a cow to appease the ghost of the dead man, each relative in turn picked up the cow's tail, saluted it and hung it on the pole. The Waddai went to a corner of the room where the Pot of the Departed was kept, sprinkled liquor there and addressed the ghost: 'Live now with your sons. Do not go to your daughters. Care for the people of your house. See that your children prosper'.

Often, after the ceremony of burning the clothes and ornaments, a man sits in the house of the deceased and the ghost comes upon him. He is led out to the pyre, and there he buries a bhāt kukri, a ghost hen, to ensure that the ghost will not come to the house and trouble its relatives.

The ghost of the murderer or his victim becomes a Mirchuk.